Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A latch mechanism for selectively latching a door to an automotive vehicle, said latch mechanism comprising:

a latch hook movable between a locked position and an unlocked position;

a release lever operatively coupled to said latch hook for selectively moving said latch hook ~~between~~ from said locked ~~and~~ to said unlocked position[[s]]; and

an inertia lever ~~engagable with said release lever to prevent movement of said latch hook between said locked and unlocked positions, said inertia lever~~ movably supported within said latch mechanism and biased to a first position ~~for moving in and out of engagement with said release lever in response to a side impact upon the vehicle~~;

wherein said release lever includes a slot and in a normal operating condition said inertia lever is aligned with said slot to allow actuation of said release lever, said release lever slot presenting sides for engaging a portion of said inertia lever for automatically toggling said inertia lever away from said first position in response to movement of said release lever to prevent seizing of said inertia lever within the latch mechanism;

and wherein said inertia lever includes a counterweight portion for moving said inertia lever out of alignment with said slot and into blocking engagement with said release lever in response to a side impact upon the vehicle in order to prevent actuation of said release lever and thereby inhibit movement of said latch hook from said locked position into said unlocked position.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) A latch mechanism according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein said inertia lever includes a tab and said slot of said release lever is aligned with and engages said tab when said release lever is actuated to unlock said latch hook when said inertia lever is in said first position.

4. (Currently Amended) A latch mechanism according to claim 3, wherein upon side impact said inertia lever moves to ~~a second~~ said blocking engagement position such that said tab is not aligned with said slot.

5. (Original) A latch mechanism according to claim 4, wherein said inertia lever is pivotally mounted within said latch mechanism.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) A latch mechanism for selectively latching a door to an automotive vehicle, said latch mechanism comprising:

a housing including a first side and an opposite second side;

a latch hook disposed on said first side of said housing and moveable between a locked position and an unlocked position;

a release lever disposed on said second side of said housing and operatively coupled to said latch hook for selectively moving said latch hook from ~~between~~ said locked ~~and~~ to said unlocked position[[s]]; and

an inertia lever ~~engagable with said release lever to prevent movement of said latch hook between said locked and unlocked positions, said inertia lever~~ movably

supported on said second side of said housing and biased via a spring to a first position ~~for moving in and out of engagement with said release lever in response to a side impact upon the vehicle~~;

wherein said release lever includes a slot and in a normal operating condition said inertia lever is aligned with said slot to allow actuation of said release lever, said release lever slot presenting sides for engaging a portion of said inertia lever for automatically toggling said inertia lever away from said first position in response to movement of said release lever to prevent seizing of said inertia lever within the latch mechanism;

and wherein said inertia lever includes a counterweight portion for moving said inertia lever into a second position out of alignment with said slot in response to a side impact upon the vehicle in order to prevent actuation of said release lever and thereby inhibit movement of said latch hook from said locked position into said unlocked position.

8. (Currently Amended) A latch mechanism for selectively latching a door to an automotive vehicle, said latch mechanism comprising:

a latch hook moveable between a locked position and an unlocked position;

a release lever operatively coupled to said latch hook for selectively moving said latch hook ~~between~~ from said locked ~~and~~ to said unlocked position[[s]]; ~~and~~

an ~~inertia lever engagable with said release lever to prevent movement of said latch hook between said locked and unlocked positions, said~~ inertia lever including a counterweight portion movably supported within said latch mechanism for ~~moving in and out of engagement with~~ blocking movement of said release lever in response to a side impact upon the vehicle;

means for biasing said inertia lever to a first position ~~out of engagement with said release lever~~;

wherein said release lever includes a slot presenting sides for engaging a portion of said inertia lever for automatically toggling said inertia lever in response to movement of said release lever to prevent seizing of said inertia lever within the latch mechanism;

wherein said inertia lever includes a tab and said slot of said release lever is aligned with and engages said tab when said release lever is actuated to unlock said latch hook when said inertia lever is in said first position;

wherein upon said side impact said inertia lever moves to a second position such that said tab is not aligned with said slot to thereby block movement of said release lever.

9. (New) A latch mechanism according to claim 8, wherein said inertia lever is pivotally mounted within the latch mechanism and said release lever is pivotally mounted within the latch mechanism.

10. (New) A latch mechanism according to claim 5, wherein said release lever is pivotally mounted within the latch mechanism.